

Strategies for Obtaining Organizational Commitment

A number of strategies should be implemented to ensure that a high percentage of employees get immunized. These strategies begin with organizational commitment.

Develop a Policy

If your facility does not have a formal policy on health care personnel (HCP) immunization, develop one, have it approved, and disseminate it to all employees. The following steps will help you create an effective policy:

- Indicate who should be immunized, why, and when.
 - Include a detailed goal, such as reaching the Healthy People 2010 goal of 90 percent immunization.
 - Make the policy available to all employees and contract workers.
- Note: If feasible, extend the policy to all visitors of the facility.

The policy can also be used as a “teaching moment” to educate leadership and staff on the importance of this issue. A sample *template policy statement* can be found in this section.

Educate Staff

Many employees still do not understand that if they fail to get a flu vaccination, they are not only putting their own health and their family’s health at risk, but they are putting the health of their patients at risk. Communicate with your employees about the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations for HCP immunization. In a study conducted in Alabama and Michigan, unvaccinated nurses tended to be less aware of ACIP recommendations for HCP than vaccinated nurses.²⁸ Vaccination of HCP has been linked with reduced work absenteeism, and fewer deaths among nursing home and elderly hospitalized patients, yet only 42% of HCP are immunized against influenza (CDC, unpublished data, 2006).¹

For Further Information: www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals

Make the Vaccine Available

To make vaccination convenient for HCP, purchase a sufficient supply of vaccine and provide immunizations on-site. This will decrease some of the well-documented barriers cited by staff as to why they do not get a flu vaccine.²⁹

For more information on flu vaccine availability, visit the Michigan Department of Community Health website at www.michigan.gov/flu

This document was adapted from Massachusetts Medical Society, Masspro, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.